BRIAN EPSTEIN presents

# FATS DOMINO

AND HIS ORCHESTRA

Special Guest Star

# GERRY & the PACEMAKERS

# Playbill

PROGRAMME 1s

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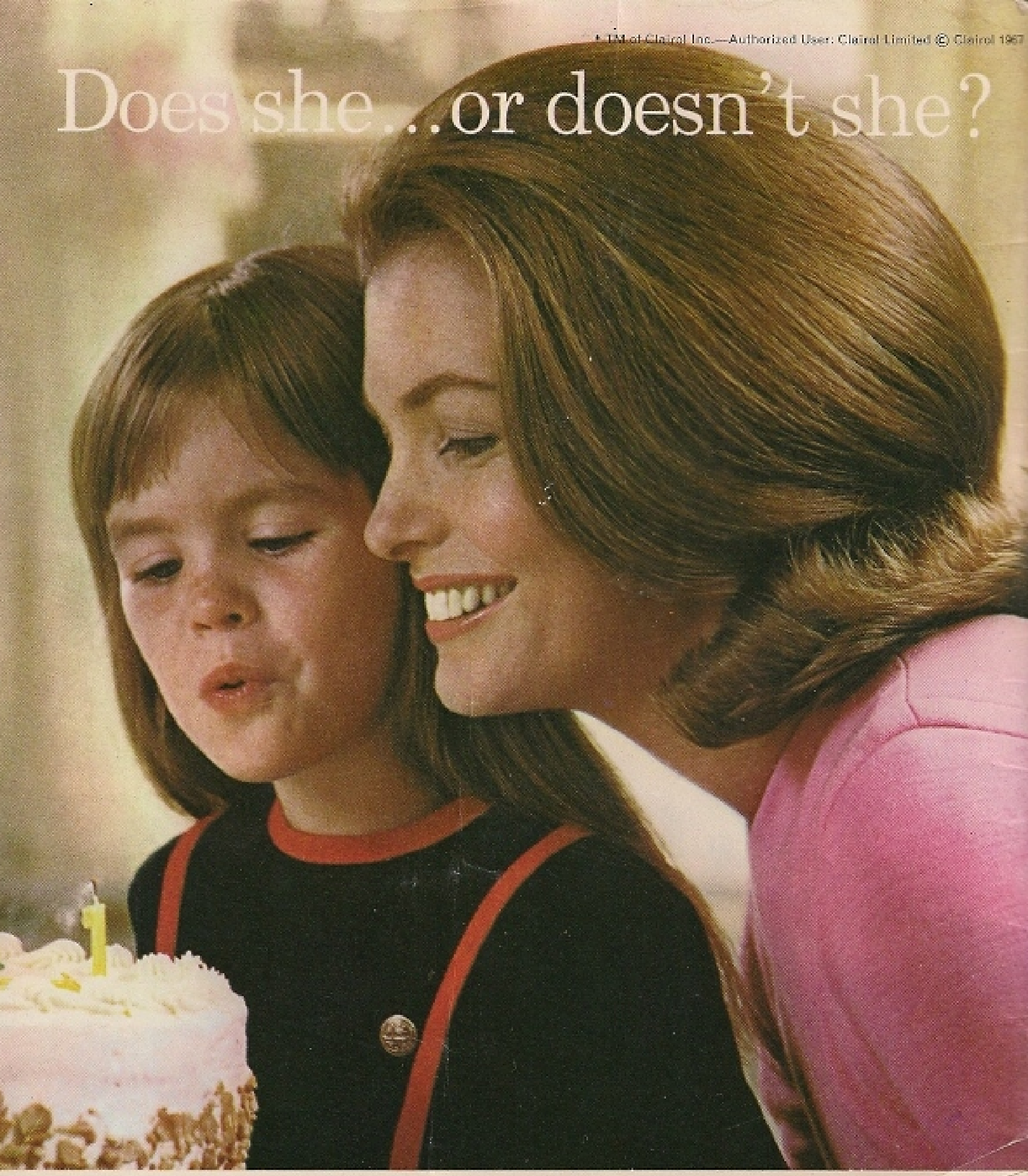

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# Playbill

*The magazine/programme for theatregoers*

**MARCH 1967**

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|---|---|
| *Editor/Publisher* | Stanley E. Flink |
| *Art Director* | Carey Procter |
| *Associate Publisher* | Ellie Howe |
| *Art Assistant* | John Cockle |
| *Adv. Director* | Grahame Edwards |
| *Production Manager* | Terence Golding |
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# TOP SECRETS

'I paid £3 for a periwig,' wrote Samuel Pepys. 'It did not feel so strange as I was afraid it would be.' Not surprising! The wig craze is an historical, not a temporary fad. Egyptian mummies wore them. So did the Greeks and Persians. And the ancient Romans imported golden hair from Germany.

In the theatre, make-up and wigs are traditionally inseparable – used dramatically to increase an audience's belief or awe, and psychologically to coax an actor into his part. In the amphitheatres of Greece, wigs topped the tragic and comic masks. Christ and the Apostles wore heavy gilt wigs in the medieval mystery plays, and in the eighteenth century Shylock wore a violent red wig of yak's hair. In the nineteenth Kean switched to a black one.

The advent of cinema and television screens demanded refinements of artifice. Close-ups placed more emphasis on realism, and 'stars' pleaded for stringent aids to youthfulness in front of the cameras.

Wig-making is an ancient craft, but unlike most of them it is booming. In the 1937 film *Marie Antoinette* there were 903 ornate wigs and 1,200, less elaborate, for peasants. But 20 years later *The Ten Commandments* had 7,500.

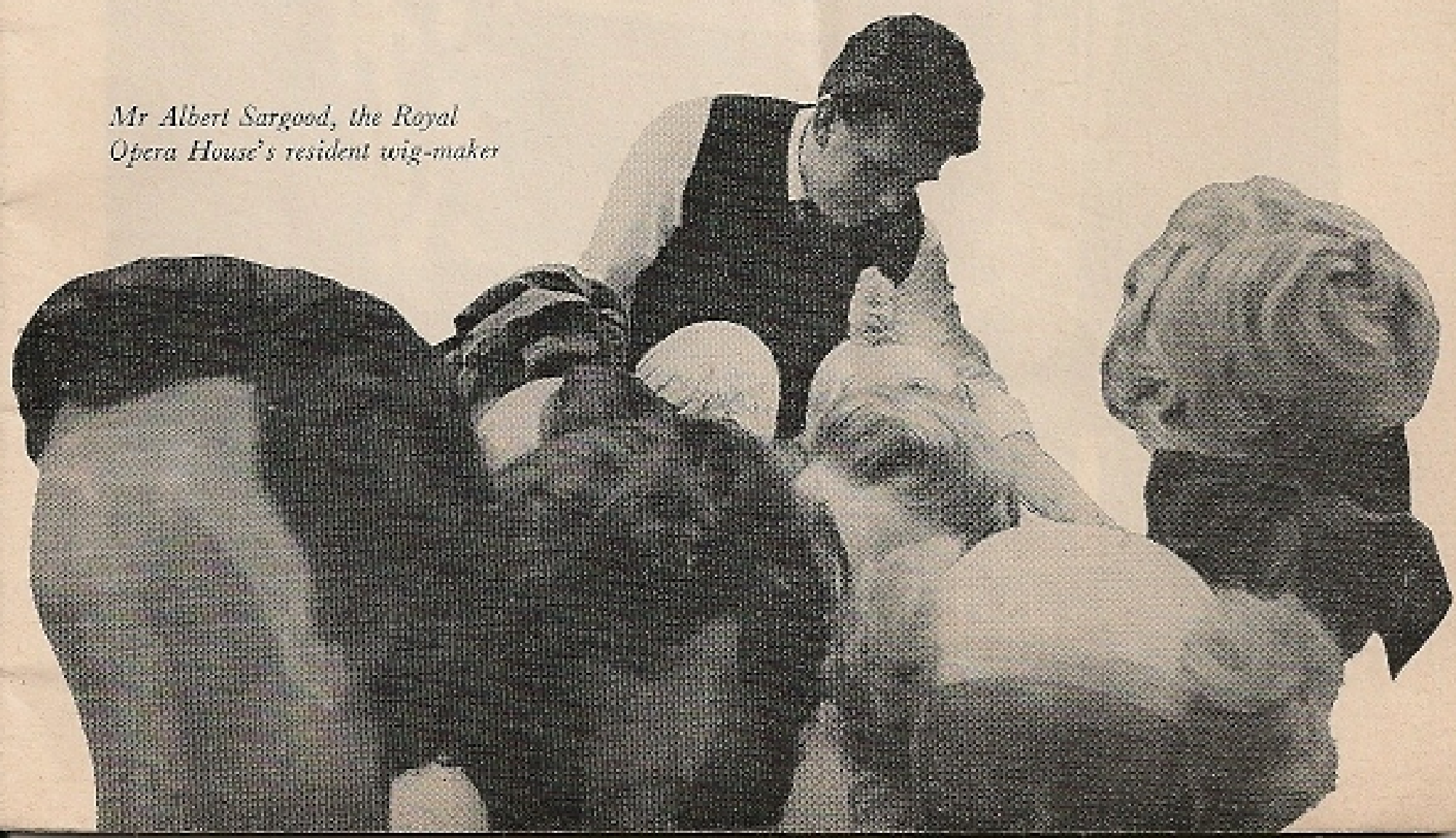
Open almost any West End programme and the credits will read 'Wigs by Wig Creations'. From a 'factory' behind Marble Arch, which looks more like an Oliver Messel set, they export to opera houses, theatres and film studios all over the world – for anything from *Lohengrin* to *Cleopatra*.

Wig Creations started 20 years ago, with ex-film studio make-up artist Stanley Hall (still in charge artistically), his administrative right arm Noel MacGregor, and two workers. Now they employ a hundred.

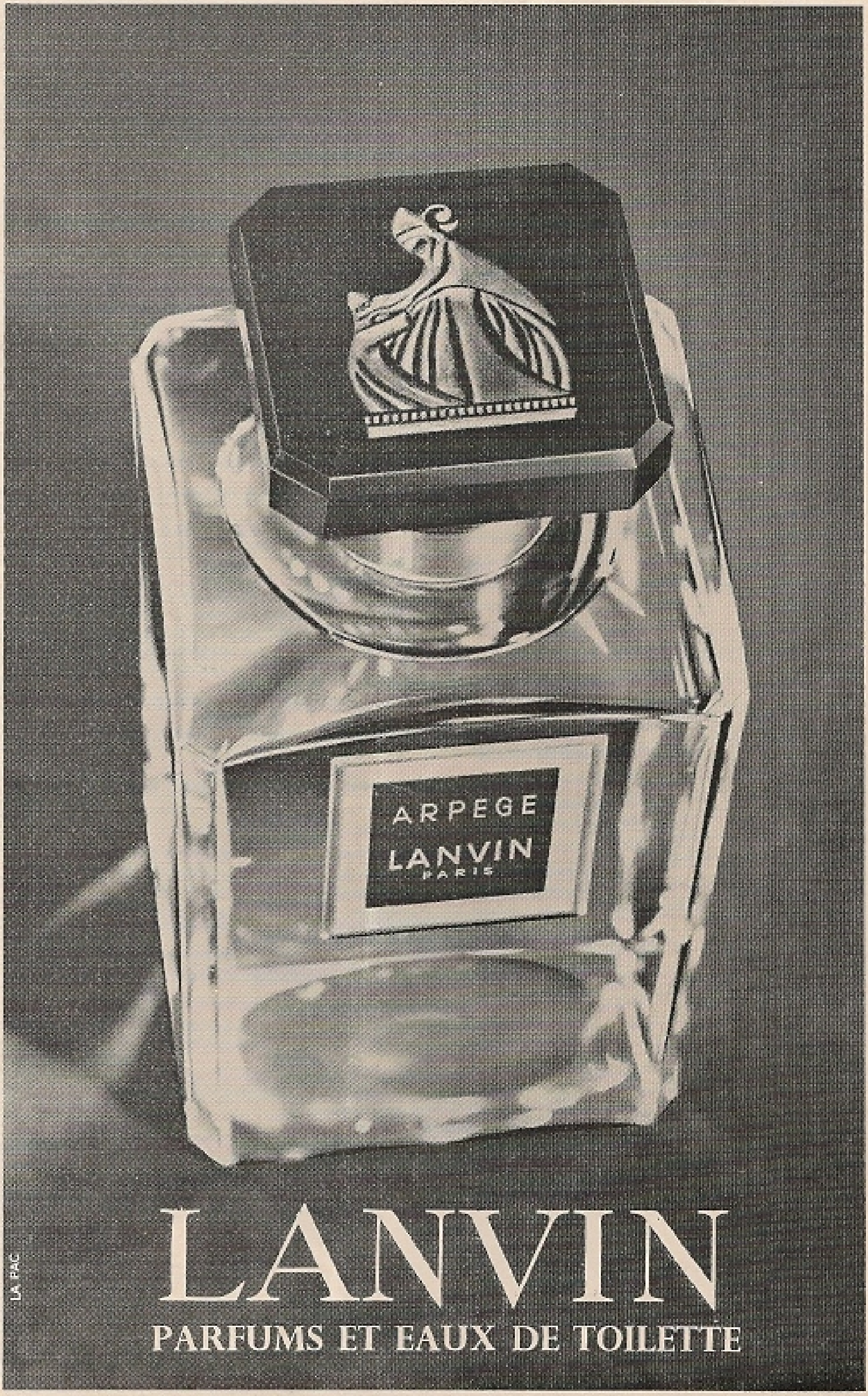
The atmosphere at Wig Creations is as discreet as a Harley Street consulting-room. Clients are never named, but are referred to as 'cases'. This is probably a hangover from a time when private wigs (minimum charge today £60) were a gimmick for actresses or models, or a necessity for balding dowagers.

The hair is bought from hair merchants. Italy, where girls wear their hair long until puberty and have it cut off if they enter a nunnery, is the biggest exporter and supplies the best quality – soft, fine and straight. Slightly less expensive hair comes in 2½ lb. chunks, and of surprisingly (*Continued page 30*)

*by Helen Dawson*



*Mr Albert Sargood, the Royal Opera House's resident wig-maker*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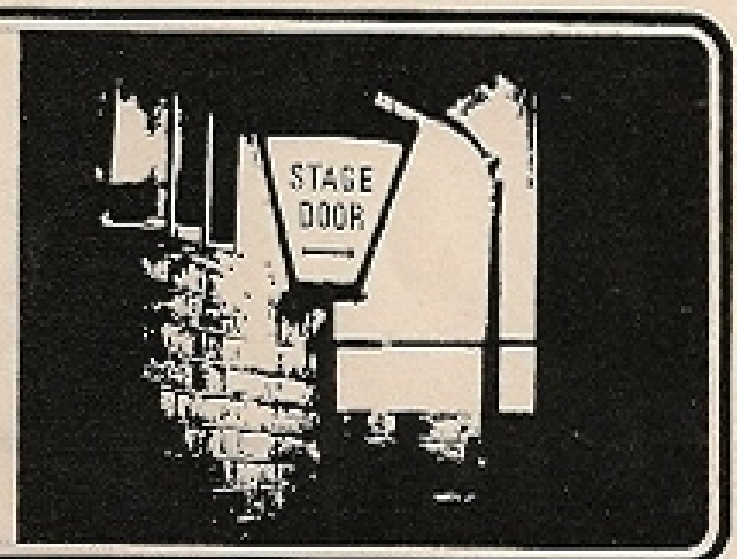
# Who's Who



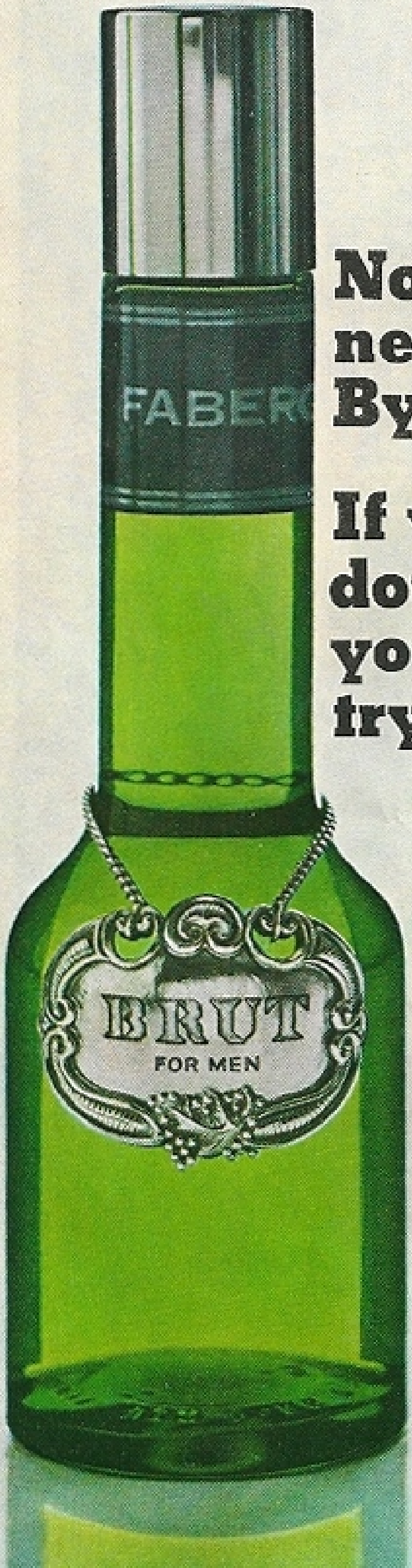

## FATS DOMINO : NOTES BY RICK DANE

Everybody has heard the records of **Fats Domino** but we in Britain have never had the opportunity of seeing the 'Fat Popper—the show stopper' live on stage. Now on his first British tour, we'll be able to catch the spontaneity and excitement of one of the all time great Rock 'n Roll performers. Success is notoriously transient in the field of pop, so what is that special ingredient in Domino's music which has kept it fresh and alive over the years? If music is to live it must have that intangible quality known as 'heart'—and Fats is all 'heart'.

An entertainer like Domino doesn't just happen—his talent is the result of a lifetime of hard work and application. Born Antoine Domino on 26th February, 1928, in New Orleans, he was one of nine children and the only one with any musical aspirations. The family was not unmusical, however, as his father was a violinist and his uncle, Harry Verett, played with such famous jazz names as Kid Ory and Oscar Celestin. Fats first displayed his musical ability at an early age when one of his cousins left an old upright piano with the family. The old piano fascinated him and in no time at all he was picking out simple melodies. Not yet in his teens he started playing and singing around the local

*Continued on page 13*

the international passport to smoking pleasure

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'honky tonks'. He decided then that he would make a name for himself in music and join the other Louisiana greats, Louis Armstrong and Jelly Roll Morton, in the Hall of Fame.

Back in the 1950s Fats Domino was one of a handful of musicians who came up with a new sound . . . a new beat, breaking away from the traditional jazz sounds of New Orleans. His music is deeply rooted in Trad and Blues, but with a big beat played out on his 'pumping piano'. The music of Domino came from Dixieland but had a danceable beat that gave it the new title of Rhythm & Blues. Fats was the innovator who brought a new tempo into the main stream of popular music. The simple phrasing and driving piano behind his intuitive vocal feeling are the characteristics of Domino's artistry.

As a record artist he's sold over ten million discs, with many of his greatest hits his own composition. His songs might best be described as folk with a Rock 'n Roll beat. Like all folk music, his songs tell a story and he gets the titles from colloquial expressions that have become part of everyday speech—'Ain't that a shame' and 'I'm in love again' are two examples. On my radio programmes, records by Fats Domino are still amongst the most popular requests with all-time favourites 'My Blue Heaven'; 'When my dreamboat comes home'; 'Walking to New Orleans'; 'Let the four winds blow'; 'I'm Ready' and 'Blueberry Hill'. Most of these have earned him gold discs.

Fats still makes his home in New Orleans and is happily married with six children. His five year old son is already something of a virtuoso on the piano and drums. His career has been an exciting one and when asked about his European tour he replied: 'If those cats like to dance, they'll dig my kind of jive.' The music of Fats Domino is filled with the stuff of life and as the Blues song goes, Fats took the sound, 'nursed it and rehearsed it' and created—together with contemporaries Jerry Lee Lewis, Chuck Berry and Little Richard—the sounds of Rock 'n Roll.

Fats' most recent release in this country, out a couple of weeks ago, is on the HMV label and is entitled 'I'm living right', backed with 'I don't want to set the world on fire'.

Rock 'n Roll is now more than a decade old, but this first British tour by Fats and his band is eagerly awaited and is another milestone in achievements for the Saville Theatre. With great pleasure we present the Fat Popper—the Show Stopper, **Fats Antoine Domino.**

Notes by RICK DANE

# Relive the Excitement of London's Musical Hits

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# GERRY Special Guest Star

**Gerry Marsden,** born just 24 years ago in Liverpool, has proved to be one of the few artists capable of surviving the after-effects of what the press described as the *Mersey Beat Boom* to emerge as a versatile 1967 performer with undoubted and considerable potential in a variety of entertainment media. Which is why Gerry is such a popular personality on the Northern cabaret circuit and, indeed, why he more than deserves the special place reserved for him and his group on "The Fats Domino Show".

Those who were buying records, going to one-night stand concerts and watching Top Twenty charts three years ago will be well-acquainted with Gerry the pop guitarist-vocalist and beat group leader. Physically diminutive but energetically vast. At the front of his three-man outfit, **The Pacemakers,** driving his voice hard into a belter or slowing down the tempo to slide into the more romantic mood of a tender ballad. But putting a distinctive pungency into whatever he performed. Even in those days Gerry and The Pacemakers refused to cling to any stereotyped presentation format. The group distinguished itself from the outset by lining up a row of three consecutive Number One records in less than a year. The first two—'How Do You Do It' and 'I Like It' were fast, infectious numbers. The third, by total contrast, was Gerry's impressive interpretation of the standard 'You'll Never Walk Alone'.

The following year Gerry And The Pacemakers took their sounds and their fame around the world. There were tours of Australia and New Zealand and an initial series of American concerts together with three appearances on U.S. Television in The Ed Sullivan Show. Then trips to Amsterdam, Copenhagen, Stockholm and a return visit

*Continued on page 17*

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to America. In between all these personal appearances Gerry And The Pacemakers made their feature film *Ferry Cross The Mersey* for which Gerry wrote nine original songs. Let us not overlook the composing aspect of the Marsden talent. One feels that it must be only a matter of time before he writes his own musical. Certainly he isn't short of ideas for words and music, nor for a good, story-line.

In the meantime it is Gerry's ability as a cabaret artist which has come to the fore during the past 18 months. There have been further tours, seasons in summer resorts, stints as TV compere, pantomime productions, but more and more the concentration has been upon cabaret with Gerry consolidating his experience to become one of the nation's most successful clubland crowd-pullers.

Backing Gerry Marsden tonight are the three original members of The Pacemakers, their personnel having remained unchanged since the group's professional inauguration. They are pianist **Les Maguire,** bass guitarist **Les Chadwick** and Gerry's brother **Fred Marsden** (drums).

Released to coincide with this Guest Star appearance is a special 'Music For Pleasure' LP record which takes a retrospective look (or, listen, if you prefer) at the varied work of Gerry And The Pacemakers during the first years of their recording career. The titles on this LP album include 'You'll Never Walk Alone,' 'Summertime', 'A Shot of Rhythm And Blues', 'Jambalaya', 'Here's Hoping', 'Pretend', 'Maybellene' and 'You're The Reason'.

Notes by Tony Barrow

# THE BEE GEES Australia's Top Teenage Group

**The Bee Gees** are 17-year-old twins **Robin** and **Maurice Gibb,** their 19-year-old brother **Barry Gibb** plus newcomer **Colin Petersen** (19).

As early as 1958 The Bee Gees were playing amateur dates as a trio (average age—9 years!) in their Manchester hometown. Then the Gibb family emigrated to Australia where The Bee Gees made their TV debut via their own weekly 30-minute shows in 1960.

It is impossible to separate the songwriting and song performing abilities of this extraordinarily talented team. In Australia each aspect of their activities has achieved substantial recognition. In 1965 they won an award as the Best Australian Composers of the Year. The following year they were given the same award for a second time—plus a trophy as Best Australian Group of 1966. In

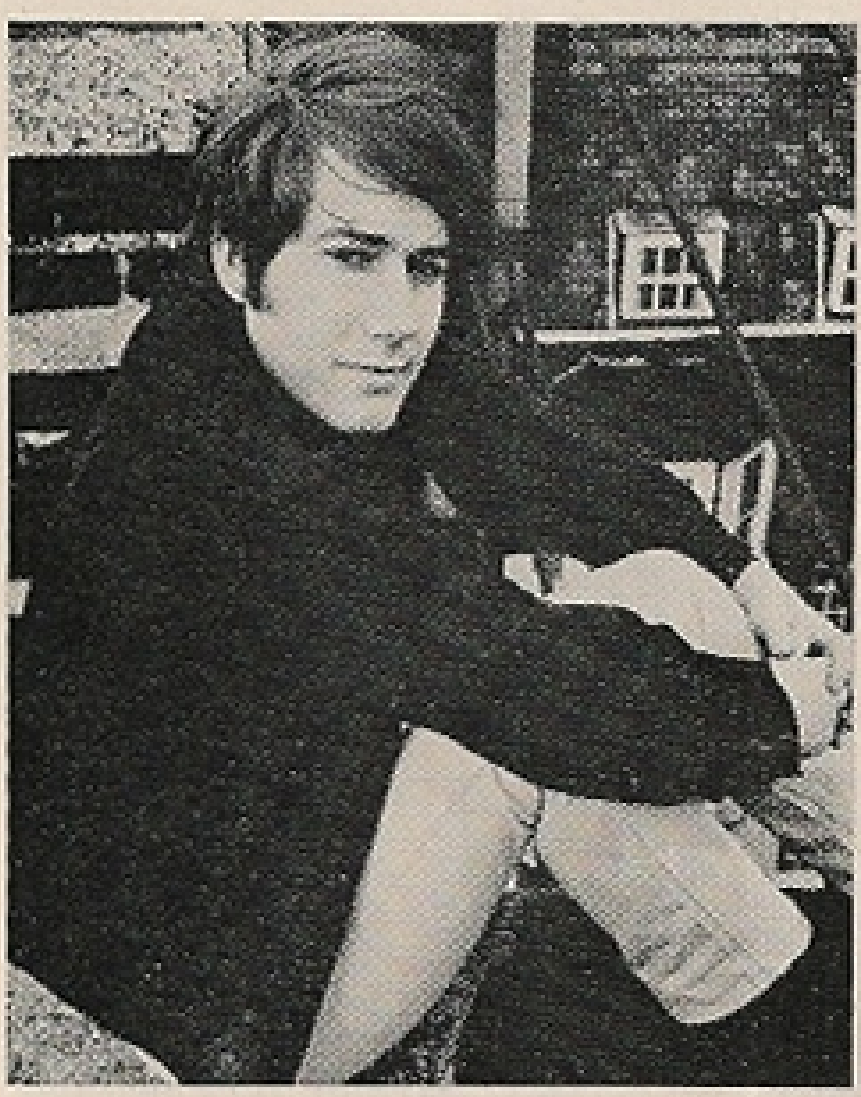
*Continued on page 18*

the meantime they had notched up a series of three Number One record hits, the most recent being 'Spicks And Specks' which was released in Britain on the Polydor label a few weeks ago when The Bee Gees returned to this country.

At the end of February The Bee Gees signed a long-term management contract with Robert Stigwood, Joint Managing Director of NEMS Enterprises.

Since arriving in London the group's working time has been occupied with a marathon series of recording sessions. The product of this concentrated effort will be a Polydor LP album featuring twelve original new Bee Gee compositions plus a single, "New York Mining Disaster, 1941," which will be released on April 14th.

*Footnote:* If the face of Bee Gee drummer Colin looks more than vaguely familiar you're probably a film fan who saw him play the title role in *Smiley* ten years ago. Or you saw him in *The Scamp* two years later or *A Cry From The Streets* with Max Bygraves in 1960. He has been a Bee Gee—the group's only Australian member—for little more than four weeks and this is his first stage appearance as their drummer.



**Rick Dane,** Saville Theatre's Resident Compère

Rick began his career in show business as an actor in Shakespeare's *As You Like It* at Regents Park, and co-starred with Vanessa Redgrave in *The World's Baby* at the Royal Court Theatre. Radio followed and he joined Radio Caroline as D.J. of his own show from 9–midnight. During his fourteen months on Caroline, Rick became known as BRITAIN'S SLOOPY D.J. with a tremendous following. Resigned December '66 so that he might freelance in Radio and is currently doing a disc programme for the U.S.A. and writing a weekly pop column in *London Look* magazine.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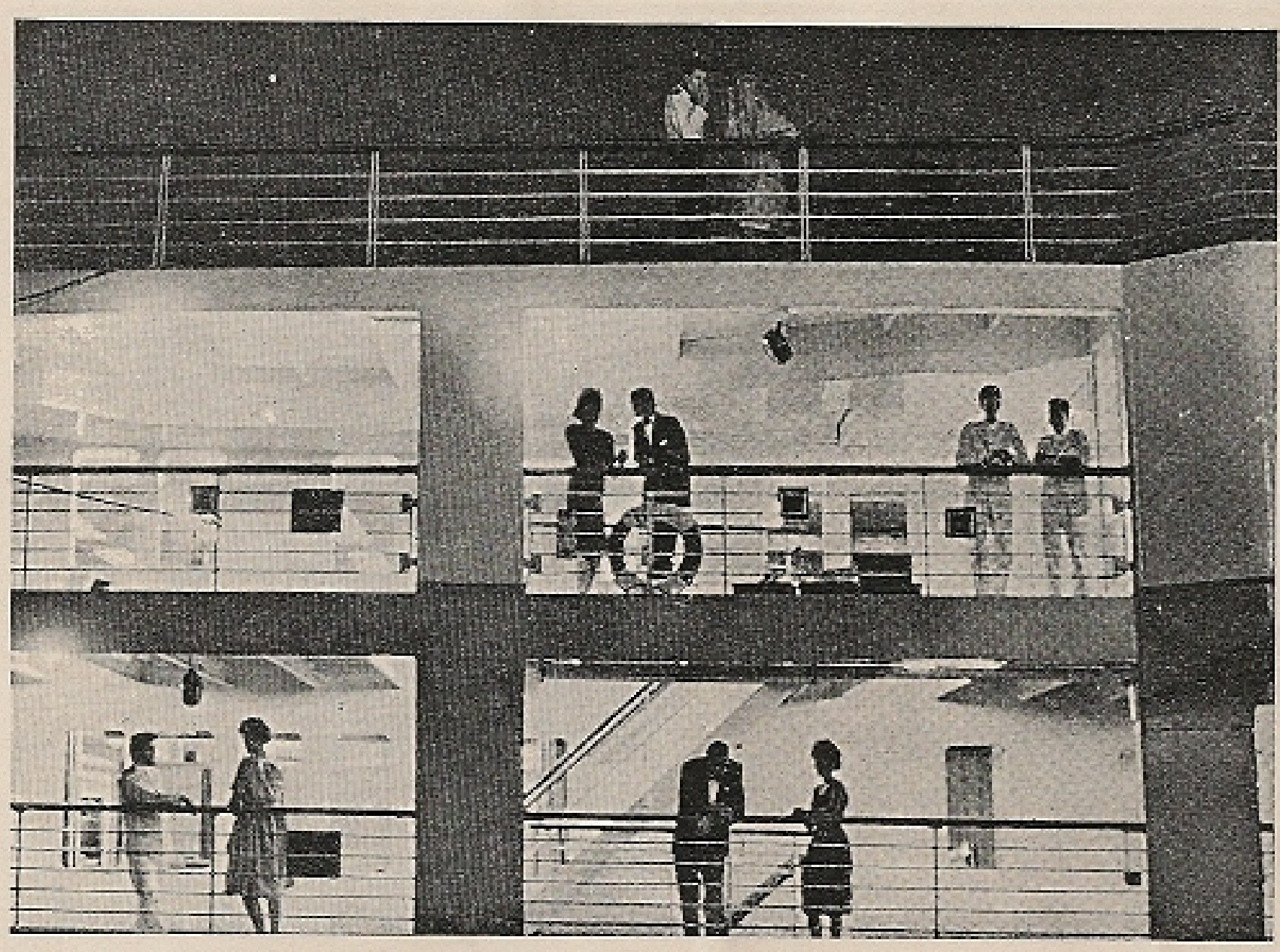

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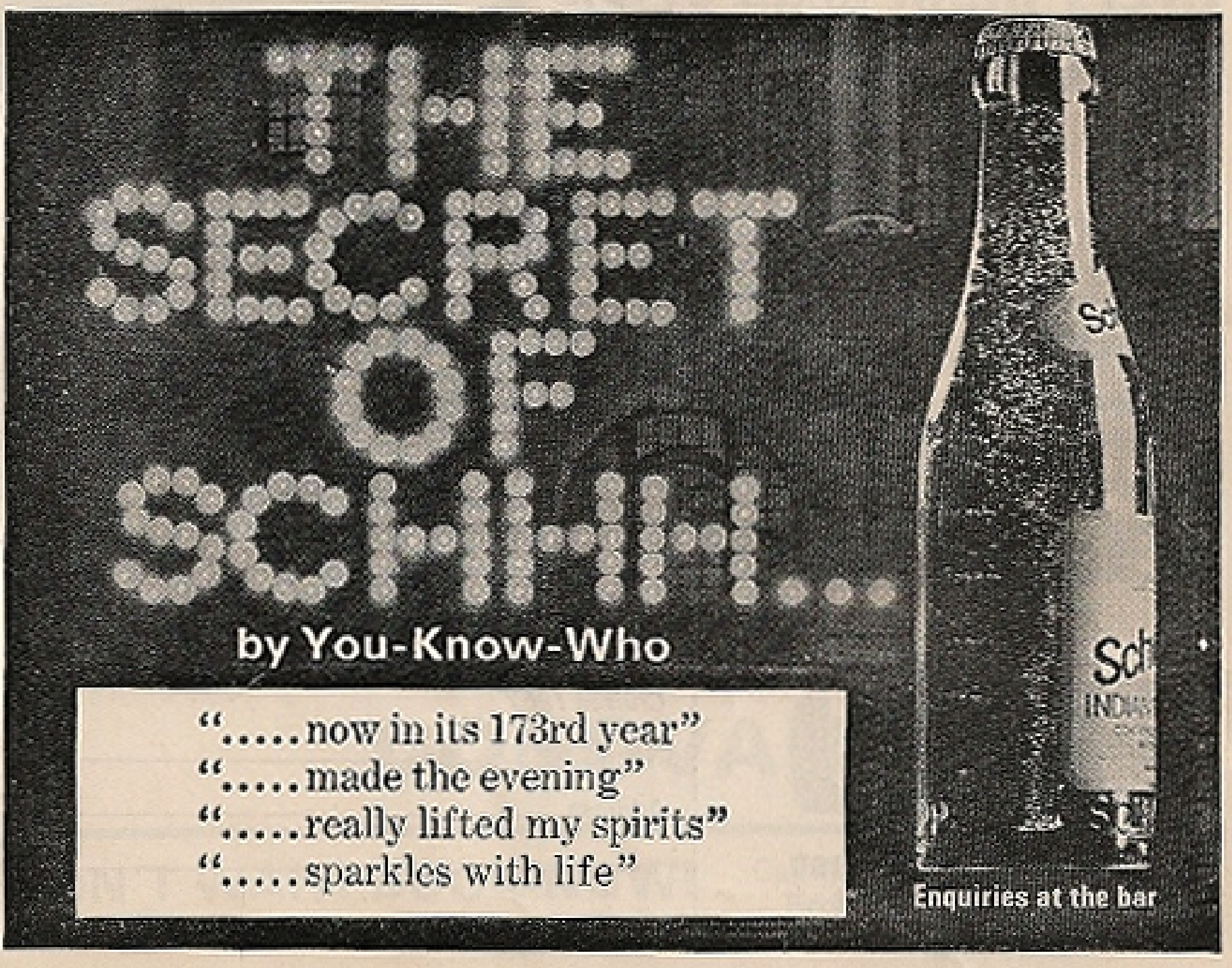
1. The public may leave at the end of the performance by all exit doors and such doors must at that time be open. All gangways, passages and staircases must be kept entirely free from chairs or any other obstructions.

2. Persons shall not in any circumstances be permitted to stand or sit in any of the gangways intersecting the seating, or to sit in any of the other gangways. If standing be permitted in the gangways at the sides and rear of the seating, it shall be strictly limited to the number indicated in those positions.

3. The safety curtain must be lowered and raised in the presence of each audience.

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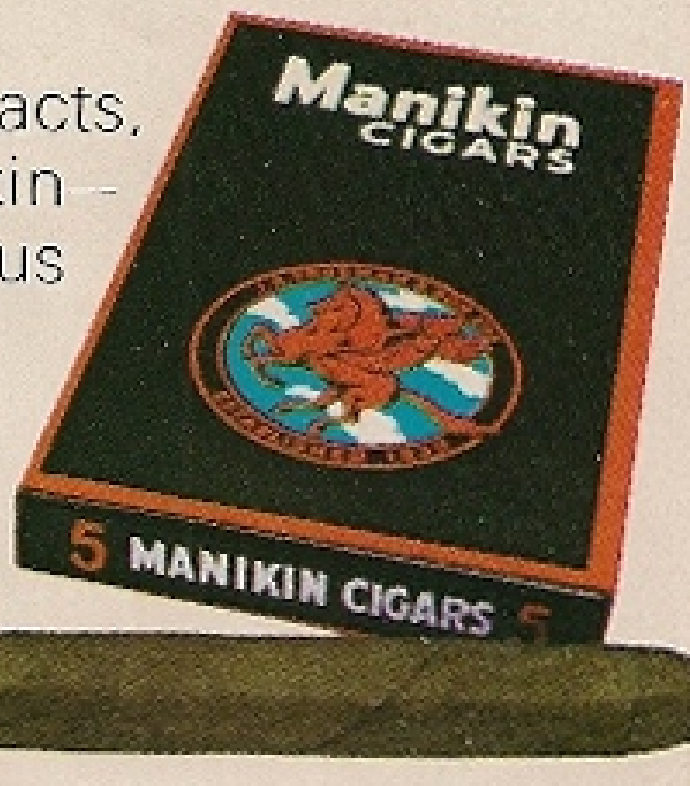


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# Records reviewed by ROGER BAKER

There's a bonus on the original cast recording of *Man of Magic* (CBS mono BRG 70027) – a song that has since been cut. It's called *Take your Medicine* and is sung with fervour by Stubby Kaye. He has another, better, number later and adds punch to a show that has a high proportion of ballads. The choruses come across vibrantly, notably the Coney Island opening number and *Sling the Gin*, a happy pub song.

The composer makes a couple of chatty appearances on a pretty sensational disc called *Joan Sutherland sings Noel Coward* (Decca stereo SXL 6255, also mono). A dozen swooningly romantic songs sung by *the* operatic voice of the moment and a potent reminder that Coward's tunes are beautifully phrased. Miss Sutherland trills magnificently at every opportunity, and *I'll See You Again* is joined by that splendid young Sadler's Wells tenor John Wakefield. What next? Maria Callas sings John Lennon . . . . More lost chords of nostalgia touched in *The Master Sings* (Music for Pleasure MFP 1111), a number of Coward originals collected on one record.

Ben Bagley has been exploring again. Last year his discoveries among the unknown songs of Cole Porter were strung into a revue seen briefly in London. Now he has been tackling Jerome Kern, and in *Jerome Kern Revisited* (CBS mono BRG 62807) comes up with some fascinating, unfamiliar songs sung by authentic Broadway voices, led by Barbara Cook and Harold Lang, including *Put Me To The Test* from that remarkable film *Cover Girl*. The Broadway cast of the Cole Porter show is also available, with Kaye Ballard doing that lovely song *I Loved Him* (CBS mono 70024).

Briefly: in *Je m'appelle Barbra* (CBS BPG 62776) the voice is equally emotive in French, also in a Streisand original called *Ma Première Chanson*. *West Meets East* (HMV ALP 2294) is an instantly approachable demonstration that the sitar is not just another gimmick of the pop world; Ravi Shankar and Yehudi Menuhin co-operate. Finally two singles from *Fiddler on the Roof: Matchmaker* and *Sunrise, Sunset* (both on CBS). □

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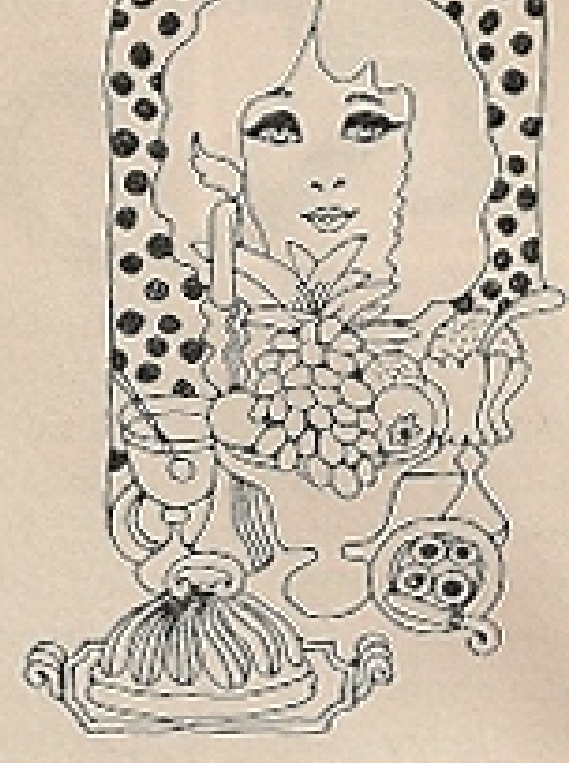


# table talk

*by Anthony Blond*

Go down the King's Road and then go on going down the King's Road and you will find a workman's cafe-cum-antique shop at 87 Waterford Road, SW6 (REN 3830), called **The Gasworks.** In fact it is near a gasworks. This is Michael Alexander's anti-restaurant, and it is open late enough to accommodate after-the-theatre diners in a cheerful, family atmosphere. It possesses London's most refined cook in the shape of elegant woman about town Joan Shihwarg, who promises to do real nursery food, such as rolypoly and treacle pud. The tariff is 25*s.* a head, including a far from dubious carafe, and it's well worth a visit if you have seven league boots.

Almost the oldest bistro in Chelsea is **Au Père de Nico,** 10 Lincoln Street, SW3 (KNI 1833/4704) which has been serving consistently good meals at unswerving prices with the same mostly North Italian waiters dishing it up. It is friendly, competent and cheerful, and, as you will see from the signed menus which almost obliterate the walls, everybody in the theatrical profession has been there at one time or another. Again you should book. The proprietor, Murray Radin, has for a long time possessed a cook far superior to any outside the West End and is particularly proud of his *pâté*.

**The Pontevecchio Restaurant,** 256 Old Brompton Road, SW5 (FRE 9082) is a solid, spacious trat., which has also been going some time and can be recommended for competence

and consistency. (As you might have gathered, I am strongly against those brilliant, amateur, overdecorated Chelsea places, which pop up once a month and where one good dish does not compensate for excess of temperament and bad lighting.) At the Pontevecchio, try the *melanzane alla parmigiana* at 4*s.* 6*d.*, the *fritto misto* at 13*s.* 6*d.* and the *calamari* at 10*s.* 6*d.* They also have excellent *zabaglione* and *crêpes*. Reckon £2 a head with wine.

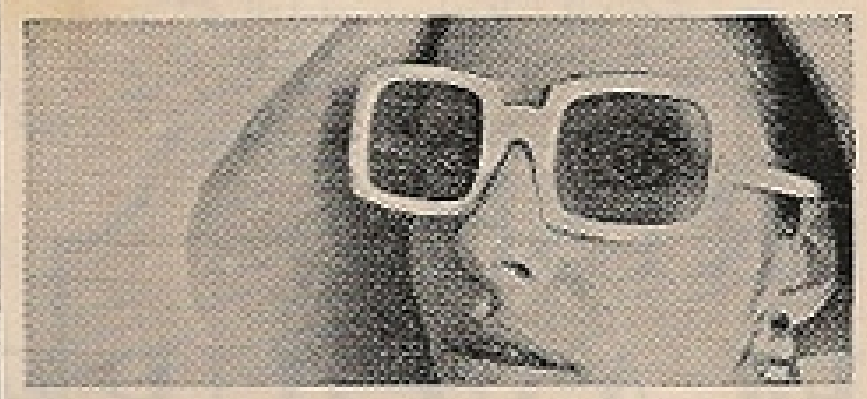
Where in Mayfair can you walk in without notice, be received *en prince*, choose from an enormous variety and leave without too great a dent in your prices and incomes policy? Answer—**The Berkeley Buttery,** Berkeley Street, W1 (HYD 8282).

From the amount of unjustly neglected and, on the other hand, hysterically overpatronised eating places in London, it seems, as Charlie Campbell, owner of the now very successful restaurant **Oats,** Hollywood Road, SW5 (*Tel:* 352-0185) remarked, that diners are more interested in *who* is eating than in *what* is being eaten.

**The Mirabelle,** 56 Curzon Street, W1 (GRO 4636), goodness knows is not cheap, and dish for dish I don't know that it competes all that well with my favourite value for money restaurant **The Caprice,** Arlington House, Arlington Street, SW1 (HYD 3183) but there are occasions when, if you have a wad of greenbacks burning a hole in your lining and want to make a splash, the Mirabelle is the place to fit the bill, and it will be quite a bill. Reckon between £4 and £7 a head. Each dish is superb, the oysters for instance are quite as succulent and sweet as those at Wheeler's. I followed this with *quenelles de homard* and then, breathing rather heavily, with a chicken done with tarragon. The wine list is possibly the grandest in London and it is very much the place for a celebration dinner provided you remember not to have lunch. Wiser to book but you can get in without.

**P.S.** Note for restaurateurs! Why don't you insist that the kitchens prepare tomato salad without the skins on the tomatoes? These are quite easily removed by covering them with boiling water but it takes a bit of trouble. However, trouble is what we pay you to take. □


Incognito to 3 Grafton Street



The glamorous creature seen leaving a little later is me!

'It's Michael!' I cried.
'Rendezvous 15.00 hours.
I think he might propose.
I've got to be beautiful.'
Relax, they said at HR.
Put yourself in our hands.
And such hands. So gentle.
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I'd ever had. Next, the world's
most famous make-up.
Then a fabulous hairdo.
'I'm beautiful,' I cried. Naturally, they said.

Michael proposed, of course (so did three men I'd never seen before in my life!) and I'm buying my trousseau from Cardin. That means back to Helena Rubinstein to magic away those inches with their exclusive Volcanotherm wax spot-reducing treatment. (Can't wait . . . I adore being pampered!)
**Write or telephone for your appointment now.**

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# IRISH FLAVOURED FASHION

*by Katharine Wood*

'Spying or writing us up?' he asked suspiciously as I made notes in front of his shop window. Reassured, he hurried me in to inspect his purple tweed sports jackets, his long vented corduroy suits, his kipper-wide ties, complete with resident top pop-singer customer—one Dickie Rock. For **Adam Manshop** is not Carnaby Street, but Dublin. This crumbling Georgian city, where horse-drawn carts still rumble over cobbled streets, where a two-minute step from O'Connell Street will take you to the slums, has suddenly gone fashion conscious. Of course the well-heeled have always been well dressed, but now every shop girl and messenger boy wants to follow suit.

Although the idea is obviously an extension of the 'Swinging London' syndrome, the clothes are original. Every Irish designer has the incomparable advantage of fine Irish fabrics at his elbow. The trendy gear at Adam Manshop is made in handwoven Irish tweed, the chunky modern cuff links are carved from Connemara marble.

Over at **Clodagh's** boutique on the ground floor of her Georgian house, I found good use made of handwork details like crochet and drawn-threadwork, Irish tweeds and Irish linen. Clodagh might be termed the Irish answer to Mary Quant: her rapidly expand-

DRAWING BY KAY GALLWEY

*At right: Irish wool shirt dress falls from a high yoke (and has an optional belt). In orange/pink/yellow and other combinations. Sizes 6 to 14, £12. From* Mary Davies Boutique, *Queen Street, Mayfair (and by post), and* Darlings *(Edinburgh).*

ing empire now includes Clodagh and Miss Clodagh, a knitwear collection called 'Blarney' by Clodagh, maternity clothes and fabrics.

'I like to think that I have a look which I hang on to through thick and thin,' she says, 'young and yet not kookie. We have customers of almost any age bracket, from 17 to 40, 50 and 60.'

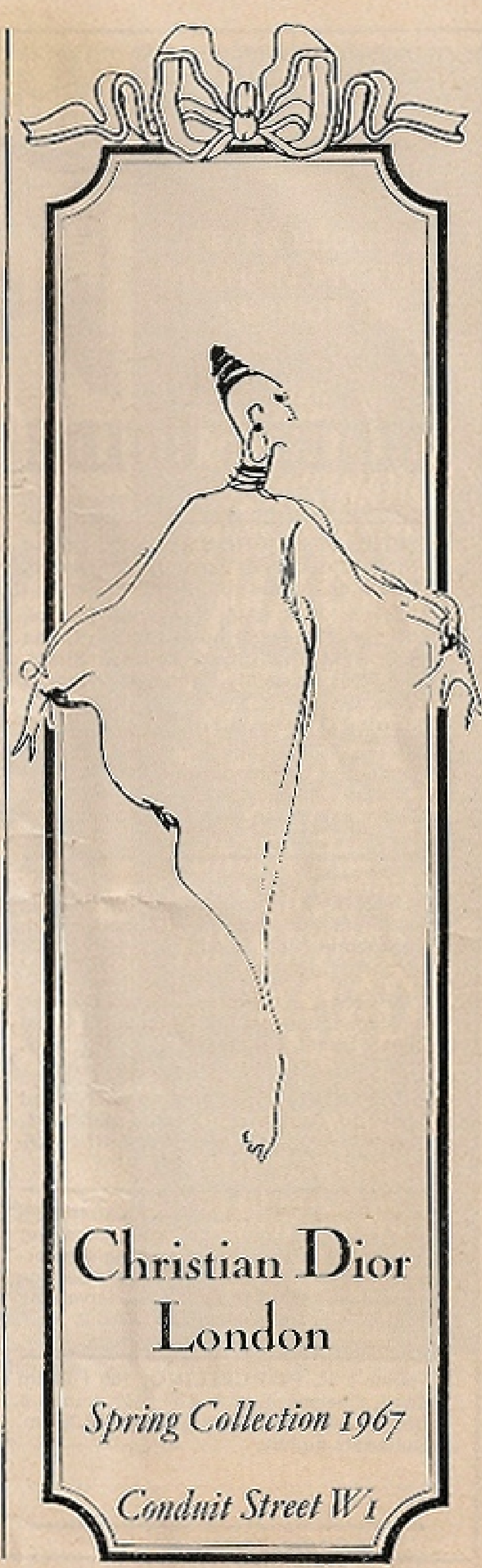
Clodagh, small and pretty but amazingly tough—she has a home and three sons to organise as well as her business—is just back from three weeks showing in America. There, her simple 'narrow-shouldered triangle' look has been a great success. 'We must export to live,' she says.

Mrs. Kay Petersen disagrees. She and her daughter Karen run the couture and boutique **Anna Livia.** Visiting stars like Dalia Lavi, Shirley Eaton and Dana Wynter drop in when they are filming in Ireland. 'Everyone wants to do mass-production. I'm more interested in keeping the high standard,' said Mrs. Petersen. 'I've never once used a synthetic fabric,' she added proudly. (Mighty manufacturers shuddered round the world.)

At Anna Livia you can find magnificent handmade silk caftans, hand-crocheted silk dresses, unobtrusively chic little suits made up in tweeds designed by Mrs. Petersen. 'It was all mud,' she says, until she visited the tweed weavers and persuaded them first to try bright colours, and now patterns.

Someone else who designs his own fashions is **Donald Davies,** justly world-famed for his Irish wool shirt dresses. From his house Charleville, outside Dublin, he rings the changes (and the cash register) with the basic theme of a very simple shirt shape. In line with this spring's move towards the triangular look, we have sketched one that falls wide from a high yoke.

The colour combinations defy description, but you can see the best of his range at the **Mary Davies** boutique, Queen Street, Mayfair. You can find a selection of Clodagh clothes at **Chic** in Hampstead, **Harrods** and **Just Jane,** Sloane Street (for maternity). For general Irishness without crossing the sea, there is the excellent **Irish Shop,** 11 Duke Street, W1, where you can find everything from Colorcast saucepans to tweeds, table linen and Connemara marble jewellery. □

Christian Dior
London

*Spring Collection 1967*

*Conduit Street W1*

# PLAYBILL DINERS' GUIDE

**ANGUS STEAK HOUSES.** Nothing but Scotch steak, the finest in the world. There's an Angus round the corner . . . .

Aldwych, TEM 3346; Leicester Square, WHI 2996; Transad House, Charing Cross Road, TEM 3782; Soho, 42 Dean Street, GER 9455; Piccadilly Circus, 15 Wardour Street, GER 4477.

and Park Lane, Maida Vale, Marble Arch, Chelsea, Knightsbridge, Victoria, South Kensington, St. Marylebone, Oxford Street & Sutton. All fully licensed to midnight. Always ask for an *Angus* . . .

**GENEVIEVE,** Intimate, personal and the best French cooking. 13-14 Thayer Street, Marylebone High Street, W.1. HUN 2244.

**L'OPÉRA,** Luxurious, Mediterranean cooking and open until 1 am. 32 Great Queen Street, London, W.C.2. HOL 9020.

**MINOTAUR,** Spacious, friendly and open on Sundays. Chelsea Cloisters, Sloane Avenue, London, S.W.3. KNI 8608.

**IVY,** For 50 years London theatreland's most famous, intimate and charming restaurant. Complete an evening's entertainment with dinner or supper. Service from 6 pm until 11.30 pm. Reservations TEM 4751/2, 1-5 West Street, W.C.2.

Franco's **IL PORCELLINO,** 169 Fulham Road, Chelsea, S.W.3. KNI 8647. Lunch & Dinner, including Sundays, past 12.30 am. Guitarists nightly.

**LA RÉCOLTE,** 67 Duke Street, Grosvenor Square, W.1. MAY 7988. Acclaimed by the critics as a big hit. French all round. Bourgeois cooking. Same year wine Fleurie 1966. Alsacian Beer. Open lunch and dinners. Last orders 11 pm. Easy parking.

**LORENZO FERRARI** is bringing back the good old days of Italian cooking. An old world menu with several of Lorenzo's specialità Emiliane. See for yourself . . . 62 Old Compton Street. Noon to 3 pm and 6 pm to midnight. 7 days a week. Reservations: Telephone GER 7612.

**SARDAR,** fully-licensed Punjab Indian restaurant. Specialists in Punjabi food. Tundory Chicken, Naan, Paratha, Curries. Pilau and Vegetarian dishes. 60 Tottenham Court Road, W.1. Telephone: 636-0382. Open daily from 12-3 and 6 to midnight.

**SCOTTS OF PICCADILLY,** This famous Edwardian restaurant is perfectly positioned for Cinema and Theatregoers. Rendezvous in the new elegant Imperial Bar where delicious Sandwiches are served with Wine by the Glass. 18/20 Coventry St., W.1. Reservations GER 7175.

**STAR STEAK HOUSE,** 11 Soho Square, London, W.1. Reservations: Telephone GER 6525—for the most succulent steaks in London. Also Dover Soles, Scampi, and Roast Chicken. Open daily, Lunch—Noon—3 pm; Dinner—5.30-11.30, including Sundays. Fully licensed until midnight.

**STAR STEAK HOUSE,** 190 Shaftesbury Avenue, W.C.2. Telephone TEM 1149 (one minute from Shaftesbury Theatre). The most intimate and fashionable eating house, soft music and candle-lights—also Wimpy bar. Specialised steaks, scampi, etc.

**YOUNG'S,** Europe's most luxurious oriental restaurant. Daily from noon to 2 am. Dancing nightly. 13/15 West Street, Cambridge Circus, W.C.2. TEM 2322.

**HONG KONG RESTAURANT,** 58 Shaftesbury Avenue, W.1. GER 3119. London's most popular Chinese restaurant.

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*continued from p.5*

varied national textures: from Germany and France, China, Japan and India. The hair merchants clean and treat it. When it arrives at the wig makers a packet of hair, whatever its doubtful origins, keeps its anonymity.

Heavily powdered and lacquered wigs are made of yak, but otherwise Wig Creations pride themselves on the quality of their hair. The hair preparers sort it, draw it off in various lengths and dye it. A hair preparer needs an immaculate eye for colour. 'To get ash blond you have to bleach the hair first to a lighter blond and then dye it down to an ash shade,' says a Wig Creations man.

The fitter is the key figure. He has to be artistic, forebearing and a PRO. He meets a production's designer, director and whoever is to wear the wig in a fitting-room, cunningly resembling a star dressing-room. He measures the head, notes the hairline, hears a lot of theatrical chat and assesses the flavour of the production. A period wig may need slight deviations to conform to the actor's bone formations – it must flatter, but within the correct style. All this while coping with high-voltage temperaments.

To the fitter's specifications, the sewing department makes the mounts. Working on wooden pates, like rain-washed statues, they mould net or gauze into phantom skull caps, which are passed on to the 'knotters'.

Each hair is threaded and knotted with a finely-tapered crochet hook into the mount in the direction that the hair is intended to fall. The final dressing is much like an ordinary hairdresser's work, except that in non-period plays the hair mustn't look salon-sleek and fresh. It is fixed with glue at the front and with a pin at the back, and even in the most rumbustious farce is unlikely to fall off – unintentionally.

In a less rarified air, in a light attic high above Covent Garden, lives Albert Sargood, the Royal Opera House's resident wig-maker. Surrounded by boxes of hair, heads of hair, designs, dyed bunches drying on a line, an oven for perming, and faceless blocks, he is still a cheerful, talkative and placid master-craftsman.

Most opera houses use outside commercial wig-makers. Sargood has been in residence for 12 years, fitting out two ballet and two opera companies. He says he can make a wig at a fifth of the commercial rate, and probably produces 2,500 a year.

While he talks he picks up pieces of hair.

*Each hair is threaded and knotted into the mount*

'That's nice . . . that's a lovely colour. Rough hair is dreadful stuff . . . it's best to work with when it's straight.' He used to freelance, but the Opera House suits him better. 'Wonderful people, wonderful directors! What more could you want?'

Dressing an elaborate golden wig for the Marschallin in *Rosenkavalier* he smiles: 'It's rewarding to see the final work, but I rarely have time to see a show through. There's always a challenge – the Marschallin has her hair done on stage. That involves three wig changes which the audience isn't supposed to see.' But no problem is insurmountable, 'though you don't get a beauty to fit every time!'

The Royal Shakespeare Company, too, is building up a wig department serving both its London and Stratford companies, and has recently opened a new workshop at the Aldwych where most of the wigs are made. A team of three is perfecting a new-formula bald wig, used to great effect in *The Marat/Sade* and a popular innovation for *Falstaff*. To get a translucent, skull-type effect, the craftsmen paint on layers and layers of plastic coating, into which they knot wisps of growth.

The RCS believes that a masterly wig is always a disappointment on stage if the actor doesn't know how to put it on properly. Actors like Paul Scofield and Paul Rogers spend a long time before every performance to get the right effect. Commercial wig-makers and actors all agree – the right effect is when the audience doesn't realise that an actor is wearing a wig! □

*Helen Dawson works on* The Observer *where she writes for the 'Briefing' feature and the Arts pages.*

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